AS 2811—1985

Australian Standard®

PERSONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL INFORMATION DEVICES

[Title allocated by Defence Cataloguing Authority: TAG AND CAPSULE, MEDICAL WARNING (Personal Information)]

This Australian standard was prepared by Committee MD/9, Personal Medical Information. It was approved on behalf of the Council of the Standards Association of Australia on 4 April 1985, and published on 6 September 1985.

The following interests are represented on Committee MD/9:

Ambulance Service—Melbourne
Australasian Society for Emergency Medicine
Australian Federation of Consumer Organizations Inc.
Australian Medical Association
Confederation of Australian Industry
Department of Health
Department of Health, N.S.W.
Department of Hospital and Allied Services, W.A.
Health Commission of Victoria
Medical Record Association of Australia
Royal Australian College of Physicians
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
South Australian Health Commission
St John Ambulance Association, W.A.
St John Ambulance Brigade, Australia

This standard was issued in draft form for comment as DR 83166.

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First published 1985

PUBLISHED BY STANDARDS AUSTRALIA
(STANDARDS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA)
1 THE CRESCENT, HOMEBUSH, NSW 2140

ISBN 0 7262 3852 X

PREFACE

This standard was prepared by the Association's Committee on Personal Medical Information under the direction of the Medical Materials and Equipment Standards Board in response to a request by the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The standard provides for a number of choices of systems. The committee has been conscious of these existing systems and has attempted to provide the flexibility for each to comply with the standard, which is primarily concerned with patient safety. Systems are preferred in which the issuing organization maintains a central information registry to supplement information on/in the device. If the issuing organization does not maintain a central registry, the facility should be available to augment information on/in the device from other sources. The committee considered that both the authenticity and availability of medical data in a central registry system can be superior to those in a system without a back-up register.

The matter of authentication, i.e. the endorsement by a medical practitioner of the validity of medical information concerning patients, has been of considerable concern to the committee. After prolonged discussion it was accepted that it was undesirable to make such authentication compulsory, on two grounds:

(i) Mandatory endorsement had aspects of a code of practice and that in this sense it was inappropriate in a product standard.

(ii) Mandatory endorsement could, on balance, limit the availability of such devices to the Australian community.

It was, however, felt that endorsement of clinical data by a medical practitioner would enhance the protective properties of portable medical information devices and that this should be strongly recommended.

The committee decided that any method of distribution by which medical authentication can reasonably be assumed, will meet the requirements of this standard.

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